Ask What Your Child Heard Before Explaining Upsetting News - working notes

One situation. Clear facts. An honest next step.

Ask what the child has heard, what they want to know and what they are worried about. Give a bounded truthful explanation and manage further exposure rather than replaying coverage to prove the facts.

Hypothetical example: A child asks whether school is open after hearing a rumor. The parent checks the official instruction before giving an answer and does not play a graphic forwarded clip.

01 Find the starting point the child actually has

Ask what was heard and what question the child has.

Information category heard

Actual question

Fact needing verification

02 Give enough truthful information

Check necessary facts and give a bounded truthful answer.

Reliable source checked

Age-appropriate explanation

Promise we cannot make

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03 Make the next media choice an adult decision

Choose appropriate further media exposure and practical information.

Next media decision

Practical instruction to verify

Responsible adult

04 Return without demanding a particular feeling

Offer a later conversation and suitable support when needed.

Later check-in time

Support route if needed

Unanswered question